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SUBJECT: ARCHBISHOP COMPARES POLITICAL SITUATION TO
ZIMBABWE'S

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11. (U) In a recent interview with the journal 'Magazine Independente,' Jaime Pedro Goncalves, Archbishop of Beira (Mozambique's second largest city), expressed concern at what he views as political discrimination against pro-Renamo regions of the country. Perceived as a Renamo supporter, he indicated these areas receive less commercial investment from the Frelimo-controlled central government and suffer higher levels of unemployment than the national average. He also suggested that authorities in these regions routinely detain Renamo supporters without charge. The Archbishop said that if this discrimination on the basis of political affiliation persisted, there would be the potential danger of Mozambique plunging into an atmosphere of violence, albeit not necessarily outright armed conflict, arguing that "in Zimbabwe there is no armed conflict, but also there is no peace."

12. (SBU) COMMENT: Goncalves is considered to be one of the most influential bishops in the Catholic Conference of Mozambique, of which he once served as secretary-general, and in the Catholic Church hierarchy in Southern Africa. The Archbishop played a prominent role in the negotiations that led to the signing of the Rome Peace Accords in 1992. He also belongs to the same tribe as Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama. Goncalves is normally outspoken, but that he would make comments so openly critical of the ruling Frelimo party while drawing parallels to the situation in Zimbabwe is unusually forward-leaning. This may portend additional criticism of the Frelimo party by opposition parties in upcoming elections in 2008 and 2009. END COMMENT.
Chapman